

TESTIMONY OF RUSS RITTER IN SUPPORT OF HB 746

Chairman Lake and members of the House Taxation Committee, my name is Russ Ritter. I appear before you this morning on behalf of myself to speak as a proponent of House Bill 746.

As has been stated by the bill's sponsor, Rep. Erickson and other proponents, this bill would allow tax credits for donors to capital construction campaigns with 501-(c) 3 status. This includes a number of campaigns I am personally aware of such as St. Peters Hospital, St. Helena Cathedral, the University of Montana, St. Catherine's Church in Big Fork and the Fort Harrison Military Museum.

I spent some 21 years in fundraising at Carroll College and I assure you that the various tax incentives were very valuable in our success. However, during my tenure at Carroll, tax credits for construction projects were unavailable, but I can assure you that if tax credits had been available, those campaigns would have finished much earlier.

Now you will hear from the opponents about how much the tax credit for the construction projects will cost the state. I submit to you that it is necessary to look at this matter like the glass is half full rather than half empty.

I ask the Committee Members for a do pass on HB 746 and I will stand for any questions members of the committee may have.